

MEMORANDUM



TO: Honorable Alex Penelas, Mayor
Honorable Chairperson Barbara Carey-Shuler, Ed.D and
Members, Board of County Commissioners

DATE: July 9, 2004

FROM: George M. Burgess, County Manager

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "G. Burgess", written over the printed name.

SUBJECT: Appointment of Miami-Dade Fire Chief

Last July, I asked Chief Tony Bared to continue to lead the Miami-Dade Fire Rescue Department over the course of this year while we undertook a national recruitment for Fire Chief. I was aware that Chief Bared was in the DROP and scheduled to leave County service on July 31, 2004. I felt it was important at the time to bring some stability into the department before initiating the recruitment. I want to thank Chief Bared for his dedication and efforts this past year. He came into a situation when the department was hurt by negative media attention and controversy. He immediately began to tackle the difficult issues, including streamlining the management of the department which resulted in more direct service in the fire district. Under his leadership the department initiated an accelerated eight-week hiring and training program, which had very positive effects on overtime use. Chief Bared is retiring from County service at the pinnacle of his career. I thank him for his many years of dedicated service to this community.

The Fire Chief recruitment commenced on February 2, 2004 with ads placed in local publications as well as targeted websites. The recruitment produced a total of 36 applicants from all over the country, as well as a strong contingent of qualified local candidates. The Employee Relations Department reviewed all resumes and forwarded thirty-one (31) qualified candidates for the Screening Committee's review. The Screening Committee members included: Director Don Allen, Employee Relations Department, Fire Chief Richard Cooke, City of Coral Gables, Director Charles Danger, Building Department, Director Lucia Davis-Raiford, Office of Fair Employment Practices, Retired Fire Chief Ed Donaldson, Miami-Dade Fire Rescue Department, Fire Chief Floyd Jordan, City of Miami Beach, and Assistant County Manager Susanne M. Torriente (Chair). Thirteen candidates were selected for interviews by the committee and five candidates were forwarded to me for final interview.

I am pleased to announce that, subject to Board concurrence, I am appointing Mr. Herminio Lorenzo to the position of Miami-Dade Fire Rescue Chief effective July 26, 2004. Chief Lorenzo has more than 31 years of fire rescue experience in South Florida. He has progressively moved through the ranks from a fire fighter to Fire Chief at the City of Hialeah. In 1994 he accepted the position of Fire Rescue and Beach Safety Director for the City of Hollywood. He has served as the equivalent of an Assistant County Manager for Broward County. And most recently Chief Lorenzo has been leading the Fire Rescue & Emergency Services Department in Broward County. Chief Lorenzo has been recognized for excellence in Fire Rescue service administration and comes very highly recommended by his previous employers.

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Chief Lorenzo has a unique combination of skills that will serve our Fire Rescue Department well. He not only is a fire/rescue professional, but he also has extensive management experience in the area of coordinated service delivery among municipal partners in light of annexations and incorporations. In addition, throughout his career Chief Lorenzo has been affiliated with numerous professional organizations such as the Board of Directors for the Dade County Chief Fire Officer Association, Florida Fire Chiefs Association, International Association of Fire Chiefs and National Fire Protection Association.

As Chief Lorenzo begins to tackle this new assignment I would like him to assess the organization with particular attention to the following issues:

- Ensure diversity in hiring and promotional practices
- Carefully review and modify as appropriate departmental training policies and procedures
- Explore labor/management initiatives and opportunities to improve service delivery and reduce costs
- Continue to strengthen administrative controls in place to track department grants, expenditure activity
- Monitor, manage and curb overtime use
- Develop a sound light duty policy
- Explore opportunities for municipal partnerships, where appropriate
- Study the effects of incorporations and annexations and develop recommendations
- Study the possible effects of the proposed increase to the homestead exemption and develop recommendations on how the fire district may need to react
- Study new service needs and develop strategies for addressing such needs
- Develop grant and other non-ad valorem revenue generating opportunities
- Invest in first responder training and equipment with other county Homeland Security partners
- Identify ways to streamline and improve the Fire Prevention Unit

Mr. Lorenzo is a long time Miami-Dade County resident with incredibly strong ties to this community. I have attached his rather extensive and impressive resume for your information and I intend to seek Board concurrence of Mr. Lorenzo's appointment at the July 13 Commission meeting.

Please join me in welcoming him to the County family. Thank you for your support.

Attachment

C: Honorable Bennett Brummer, Public Defender
Honorable Joseph P. Farina, Chief Judge, Eleventh Judicial Circuit
Honorable Katherine Fernandez-Rundle, State Attorney
Honorable Harvey Ruvin, Clerk, Circuit and County Courts
Robert A. Ginsburg, County Attorney
Marvin O'Quinn, President, Public Health Trust
Robert Meyers, Executive Director, Commission on Ethics and Public Trust
Christopher Mazzella, Inspector General
Assistant County Managers
Department Directors